names to their dog, and had distributed presents to validate the bestowal. Consequently, the animal is a chief (see Plate 11) and can do as he likes. When it dies it will be mourned as a chief. Moreover, a number of people have returned the presents which they received at the time the dog was made a chief, and this money is kept by the woman and her husband, to be used when they perform the rite of mourning for the dog at death.

When this is possible, in the present degenerate days, it is not difficult to understand how, formerly, a great chief felt himself above the restraints that hindered lesser men. The last great Bella Coola chief was *Pathe*, who died between 1870 and 1880. His influence and power were so great that he was a virtual ruler, daring anything. If he requested a young man to take his food box home and the youth was slow to obey, *Pathe* had no hesitation in killing him on the spot. Such great power, though unusual, is intelligible to the Bella Coola, since *Pathe* gave far more potlatches than any of his contemporaries. Other chiefs have been known to attempt a similar arbitrary use of power, but have failed, since their prestige was not great enough to justify it. The fame of a mighty chief spreads up and down the coast, and protects him and the members of his family from being ambushed and slain in any sporadic foray. During an actual fight, however, a chief had to take his chances with the rest, but the comparative immunity was a great advantage.

The Bella Coola recognize the fundamental differences between their own concepts about chieftainship and those of other coastal tribes with whom they come in contact. This point was mentioned in the course of conversation by several men. The most powerful chief known to them was *Tsikas*, who, they say, was virtual monarch of the Kitkatla. None of his subjects could go hunting without his permission, and he had rights to a certain share of their booty. At any ceremony presents had first to be given to him, and if he were slighted in this respect, he would kill the offender. It is be-

[See art. 116, P 86 (c) - ANALYST]

(a) The strengthening of the donor's rank.

(b) The strengthening, or initial establishment, of rank for a number of young relatives of the donor who may, or may not, be those who are being initiated into the *tsetsaet* society. Other youths may also be established on rank by their relatives.

The duration of a potlatch varies with the number of rites being performed. The preliminaries, including the beginning of seclusion for *tsetsaet* initiates, require at least several weeks, in some cases months. There is further delay of a week or more after the arrival of the first guests, as only when the last party has arrived can the actual potlatch begin. This can then be completed in three days and nights, although if many initiates are performing their *tsetsaet* dances, a longer time is required.

What are the consequences of giving a potlatch?

In the first place the donor spreads the fame of his name far and wide, also the myth with which it is incorporated. Thus he increases the renown of his ancestors, a source of intense pride and gratification.

More important even than this, it elevates the donor himself. With the proper carrying out of the complicated ritual and the knowledge that his name is now known among different tribes, a man experiences a feeling of mental superiority which enables him to take a leading part in the affairs of his community. In Bella Coola a chief (*nálkaq*) is a person whose influence is paramount owing to his success in giving potlatches.[1] If several chiefs in one village have given potlatches, he who has given most is generally of greatest importance, although often a man of forceful character who has held, for example, five potlatches will be regarded with greater respect than one of lesser weight, even if he has given six. The whole system is exceedingly fluid, as might be expected where chieftainship depends on individual prowess. In theory, the man who holds the name of the first person to occupy a village, at

[1] Particularly if he has given four potlatches and can accordingly be described as a *nuxnit* chief (I, p. 173). In *nuxnit* songs the archaic word *ntlámaxa* is also sometimes employed for "chief."

was being feared and hated by all. For his prerogative was so strong that he could not cease to act. He found by chance a cave near the top of precipitous Mount Nanimata, not far from his village, and told everyone that he would die there, where no one would ever be able to spit or urinate upon his grave. One autumn, when an old man, he disappeared, and although search parties entered the woods for him, they were unsuccessful. Next spring, some young men visited the cave in which they found his badly decomposed corpse; the warrior had kept his promise.

The profession of warrior carries with it prohibitions and requirements other than with regard to killing. Such men are thought always to be so wild and restless that they cannot sleep at night, but prowl around the village watching for possible foes. In actual fact, warriors seldom sleep quietly throughout the night. They have one restriction of a social nature, in that they can never be confined in the back-room or intrusion into the mixed society. Consequently, no *tsetsiwam* ever comes to one of them. When one gives a potlatch, a rather beautiful song is sung for him as he remains in the central part of the house. What affiliation this brings him with the mixed society is obscure.

It is difficult to say to what extent a professional warrior believes in his own powers, since there is, and must always have been, great individual variation. The white man finds it difficult to understand the psychology of a man who considers himself bound to kill on request, simply because presents have been distributed to make him a warrior. It must be remembered that this is one of the most pervasive features of Bella Coola life; functions of all kinds depend upon validated prerogatives, and there is no doubt that a man who has one of this kind is actually influenced to such an extent that he begins to believe in his own prowess. It was unusual for a warrior to exercise his powers as freely as did the *Ănăx-ăx-i* man, but the Bella Coola have no difficulty in explaining this:—his prerogative had been confirmed with more lavish expenditure

901 than that of anyone else. The Bella Coola do not rationalize
•156 in a scientific manner; if a man holds a belief firmly, he acts on it without questioning its logic. Moreover, if a professional warrior functions a number of times, this in itself is enough to strengthen his conviction that he must act henceforth in the same way. It can be said with confidence that the owner of
[463] a professional prerogative has considerable belief in his own powers, that this acts on himself to render him proficient, and that the majority of the community have respect for his capabilities.

555 THE PROFESSIONS OF SINGER
424 Singing is one of the professions open to a Bella Coola
533 either through natural ability or an ancestral prerogative.
[463] There is a constant need for men able to sing and compose songs for every kind of ceremonial, so a young man of talent has little difficulty in gaining admittance to the choir. He may even win great distinction and become recognized as the leading authority on musical matters. None the less, his success is considered to be accidental and unsubstantial, lacking the foundation that comes from the possession of a duly validated professional prerogative. A person made a singer by the latter means may be entirely unable to compose; in this case he is not a member of the choir, although he enjoys the social distinction which he has won by distributing goods to confirm his professional name. The singer most respected is he who combines with natural ability a confirmed prerogative to give substance and power to his position and compositions. At the death of such an one, an effort is always made
[553] by the members of his ancestral family to transmit the name
428 to a youth who has shown musical promise. Arguments and
[578] differences of opinion are common among the members of the choir and in such cases the self-assurance and influence of a man whose position has been made strong by the distribution of presents often outweighs that of one who can rely only on his actual ability.